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ABSTRACT

In Great Britain, it is not unusual to find primary schools staffed almost entirely by women, but managed by men. This paper argues that more women should manage education in western Europe and explains why. It examines the stereotypes of "gendered" management styles. For example, both Margaret Thatcher and Bill Clinton have encountered public criticism because they used combinations of feminine and masculine styles. It is argued that even when women are in positions of management, they remain at a disadvantage because they are expected to manage differently. Feminine management styles are often seen as inefficient and lacking in decisiveness. The paper describes the approach used by the Management Development Centre (at the Institute of Education, London University), which takes account of women's professional experiences and learning styles. The program seeks to develop a women-friendly pedagogy, which is based on the following cycle of learning--concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The formation of a European women's management-development network is suggested. (LMI)

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THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN INTO EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

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THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN INTO EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

In this paper, I will explore the following issues:

- The proportion of women in education management in Western Europe

- Why I think more women should manage education in Western Europe

- Are there more women in education management in *Central* Europe?

- What are "gendered" management styles?

- Which management styles are acceptable?

- Even when there are more women managing, are they still disadvantaged because they are expected to manage differently?

- Do management development programmes take into account women's professional experiences and learning styles?

- Is there a place for a European network of those people interested in exploring the position of women in the management of education?

The statistics about women in education management in Western Europe, Australia and North America:

In the last few years, an area of scholarship and exploration has developed about the management of education, about management styles, about the gendered aspects of management styles, about the number of women in education management, and about ways of encouraging more women into education management. Some of the writers in these areas in Britain, Australia and the United States have been respectively: Torrington and Weightman (1989), Judi Marshall (1986), Blackmore (1989), Adler, Laney and Packer (1993), Shakeshaft (1993), Catherine Marshall (1992), and Ouston (1993). I offer this list only as a quick introduction to the reading. The references in each of these books will lead those interested on to a richer and more worthwhile exploration of relevant literature than I am able to offer here.

Tables of statistics in Ouston (1993) show that in Britain in 1991, women made up 81% of the teaching force in primary schools, thus men made up 19%. However, 19% of men teachers held senior management posts in those schools, in contrast to 9% of the women teachers. These statistics demonstrate a considerable imbalance. It is quite usual to find British primary schools staffed almost entirely by women, but managed by men.

The same statistics show that although women made up 46.9% of the secondary school

teaching force, 32% of men and 14% of women held senior management posts. Again, many more men hold management responsibility, although there are almost equal numbers of men and women teaching in secondary schools.

Why I think more women should manage education in Western Europe:
Much has been written about the social construction of the position of women in Western European society which might explain these statistics. I have written elsewhere (Gold 1993) that one of the rôles of education might be to encourage what Freire calls "the transformative dialogue". Paula Allman (1987) describes this dialogue as a group activity where 'participants undertake a critical analysis of their reality and formulate explanations capable of challenging the conventional ones'. So if girls and women are to be able to take more of an equal share of the power and the decision-making in Western European society, they must be fairly represented in all the groups in the educational system within which transformative dialogues are taking place, and where education is being defined. In classrooms, playgrounds, staffrooms, staff meetings, management meetings, and senior management teams, the women and men of today should be equally represented in order to hold the discussions that will transform the lives for the women and men of tomorrow.

This is an argument for social justice and human rights. But I also believe that many women managers are struggling to bring with them more feminine models of management. I will expand on this later, but here, I want to say that some of the more feminine management models such as consultation and team work lend themselves much more to encouraging Freire's transformative dialogue than some of the more traditionally masculine models of formality and competition.

Are there more women in education management in *Central*Europe?
I know from my discussions with women and men education managers in Central Europe, both through the school leaders in the European School of Education Management, and through Peter Karstanje's Training Experts in Developing and Implementing School Management Courses, that the statistics of men and women teaching and men and women managing are different in Central Europe. I am told that there are proportionately more women managers in schools in Central Europe than in Western and Northern Europe. But I do not have real statistics - these comments are the outcomes of conversations, not of hard and serious research. Perhaps this is a task for a network of those interested in exploring the position of women in education management in Europe.

What are "gendered" management styles?
Various writers in this field have defined different styles of management as "masculine" and "feminine". I think it is important that we do not describe these styles as "male" and "female" because then they become located too much in the personal. We end up blaming men and patronising women. Neither of these activities are helpful because they are too rigid and do not allow for attitude change or growth.

It is important to understand that effective male managers employ some classically defined "feminine" management styles, such as collaboration, co-operation and lower control. And successful female managers certainly show some of the management characteristics defined as "masculine", such as rationality, strategy and analysis. In fact, effective managers, both

female and male, employ a spectrum of both masculine and feminine models of managing, and move along that spectrum depending on the issues and the people to be managed.

Which management styles are acceptable?
I would like to move the discussion out of education for a while, and look to the broader stage of world politics for illustrations of this point. There are two recent international leaders who have at times been judged as incompetent because they seemed to go against expected "gendered" management styles: Margaret Thatcher and Bill Clinton.

We in Britain read and heard descriptions of Margaret Thatcher in her early years as Prime Minister which showed her to be unworthy of her office because her clothing was too frilly and her voice was too high. She certainly compensated for her early mistakes later in her career by dressing and behaving in ways which encouraged cartoonists to show her in pin-striped suits with padded shoulders, often acting with physical violence by hitting people with her handbag. The recently-published memoirs of members of her former cabinet have humorously juxtaposed her red nails, her iron will, her deepened voice, her feminine graces, and the lethal use of her handbag. How funny to be managed in a masculine style by someone who is so clearly feminine! Here is an example of a woman who by her appearance was initially judged to be too feminine to survive in the male world of politics, and who was then ridiculed when she appeared to adopt more aggressively masculine characteristics such as authoritarianism, sharpness, and an unwillingness to listen.

President Clinton, on the other hand, has been criticised as weak and indecisive when he has clearly taken time to make decisions. He appears to have employed more "feminine" management characteristics such as consulting with others and working with a team, rather than having a transparent and fixed vision, and making decisions quickly, decisively, and alone. His image, too, suffered even more when he appeared to respond to these criticisms. His placing of active American troops on a war footing in various parts of the world has been described as the man who is over-compensating for his former pacifism: the masculine model over-compensating for the earlier feminine model.

It seems that both these people were criticised for acting against expected gender stereotyping. When they seemed to listen to the criticisms they were probably de-skilled enough to over-compensate with apparent lack of judgment, and they were ridiculed again. Having lost credibility, it was particularly difficult for them to regain it.

These two examples show just how complicated, but how critical, the attitudes of those being managed towards those managing them can be. I am paying particular attention here to the gendered linkage between expectations of behaviour, the interpretations of behaviour, the reality of behaviour, the response to criticisms about behaviour and the public nature of it all. There seems to be no place for any sign of vulnerability. Modifying action as a response to reflection can be interpreted as hesitation, and therefore as weakness.

Even when there are more women managing education, are they disadvantaged because they are expected to manage differently?
So, to return to managing in education. If, as I have illustrated above, feminine

management styles are seen as "soft", inefficient, and lacking in decisiveness, and if many women employ feminine management styles, how free are women to manage in ways they know best, for example, collaboratively and consultatively? Either they face criticism and ridicule, and are ignored and be-littled, or they are driven to behave in ways to which they are not philosophically attuned. In the latter case, their lack of commitment to their enforced management style is easily detected, and seen as another proof of weakness.

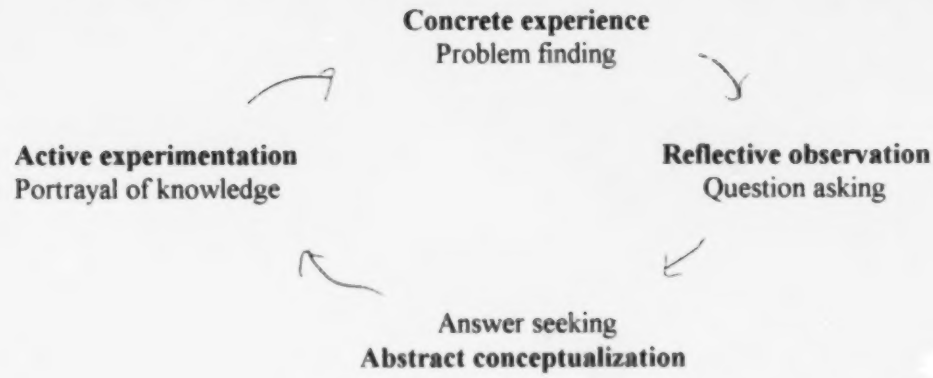
And what about managers who behave differently from their expected gendered styles? What if some women choose not to employ feminine models, but to be more directive? Their femininity is questioned, in much the same way that Bill Clinton's masculinity has been questioned. Much strength of character is needed to withstand such personal attacks on sexuality. Many women and some men who recognise thesedilemmas decide not to become managers in order to continue to work in ways which they feel most comfortably allow them to work within their professional ethics.

Women managers sometimes have to deal with responsibility and accountability for large organisations, but have to do so within societies which construct their position as wives and mothers as subservient to their men. So they learn to manage the men for whom they are professionally responsible in the same way that they are socially constructed to treat men in their society generally - in a servile and manipulative manner. And this manner is characterised as feminine, unacceptable and unclear.

In some cases the organisations that are managed by women become seen as less serious, less important, less hard-edged than those managed by men, simply because they are managed by women. In Britain, primary school education is undertaken mainly by women, and so it is seen as less important and less serious than secondary education. Our Ministry for Education has suggested that anyone, even mothers, can teach younger children. There are proposals under discussion to introduce unqualified teachers into primary schools because "common sense" is apparently enough to work with such young children. Thus, in the section of the education arena where women predominate, the work is seen as easier and not really professional.

Do management development programmes take account of women's professional experiences and learning styles?

At the Management Development Centre at the Institute of Education, London University, we believe that the people who attend our programmes are experienced professional teachers and managers. They come to us after several years of classroom teaching, and with some experience of managing their schools, either as curriculum leaders, or with whole-school responsibility. We plan our work with them based on the assumption that over several years they have developed a body of knowledge and a set of skills that make them at least effective teachers. If they did not have these skills and knowledge, they would not be seen by their organisations as capable of management in education. I have described this part of our work in greater detail elsewhere (Gold 1993), but I will outline our theoretical framework here. We use Kolb's (1984) cycle of learning experience as a framework for our development programmes:



We plan our nine-day programmes so that they last for three parts of three days each, each part separated by a month back at work. This already makes for a cycle of learning, because people think about their work when on the course with us, and think about the new learning from the course when they are back at work.

As *concrete experience* we either link our tasks very closely with the work-based experience of our participants, or we ask them to use their work-based experience as material for the discussion.

We introduce as many opportunities for *reflective observation* as possible during the programmes, including small group discussions, individual diaries and private reflection. It may be at this stage that we come the closest to entering into Freire's transformative dialogue.

For the *abstract conceptualization* stage, we offer inputs about research findings and theoretical frameworks, and suggest relevant reading. We sometimes ask 'experts' to come and talk about their research.

Active experimentation is a part of the cycle that is often missing in programmes for adult learners. In the gaps in our courses, participants can try out new strategies back at work. We offer opportunities to plan new strategies, and when people return to the next part of the programme, they can reflect on their successes.

It may not be immediately clear why programmes based on Kolb's cycle of learning experience are particularly useful for women. I would like to raise then answer two questions here:

- "How do we know that this is a particularly 'women-friendly' pedagogy";

and

- "*Why* is it a particularly women-friendly pedagogy?"

How do we know?

When we formalised our teaching methods into the cyclical and reflective nature they have now, we began to publicise our programmes and courses with descriptions of those methods. All our course leaflets include the following paragraphs:

> There will be a strong element of experiential learning in group workshop activities, particularly within the Team Building module. We will examine ways of transferring this learning to the rest of the programme, and to course participants' workplaces.
>
> We will build on the experience of course participants. Tutoring will be intensively available and facilitative rather than directive. Our teaching methods will include a mixture of some direct inputs, experiential learning, group discussions, small group workshops and feedback sessions.

And when we looked at our statistics, we realised that the gender balance on our programmes had changed. We now have the same ratio of women to men as the ratio of women to men in teaching. These are management development programmes, but the numbers do not reflect the balance of men and women in the **management** of the British education system - we have more women, just as there are more women within the education service as a whole. As our teaching methods become known, they seem to find more of a response with those people who learn reflectively and experientially. And it seems from our statistics that those people are more likely to be women.

Why?

At the Management Development Centre, we constantly reflect on our practice and we encourage participants to reflect on their learning. So we try to assess the effect of our work informally through discussions about the learning and teaching, during the process of the programme. We also ask the participants to write their evaluations at the end of each three-day session, and immediately after the end of the nine-day programme. But experiential learning takes place over a passage of time, during which practice and theory interact. Thus, the evaluations completed at the end of a programme do not take account of the active experimentation stage, or of some of the reflective observations, after people have returned to work. So we also contact participants six months after the end of the programme for a more formal evaluation of the programmes, and we ask them about such issues as any changes in their practice that may have resulted from their attendance at the Management Development Centre.

In 1992, we used the questionnaires we sent out as a basis for a piece of research into the development of managers in education (Ouston, Gold and Gosling, 1993). And the responses, particularly from the women, confirmed that our ways of working are successful partly because we offer affirmation of their career patterns and transferable skills.

Writers about women in education such as Ozga (1993) and de Lyon and Migniuolo (1989) have shown that many women teachers, certainly in Western Europe where childcare arrangements are not part of the state provision, have irregular career patterns. They are encouraged to go into teaching in the first place because it fits well with family

commitments. If they then take time out to have their families, they often return much further behind the men of their own generation, frequently to jobs with lower status than before their maternity leave. Because of these career breaks and expectations that they might stay at home or that they will not be able to concentrate fully on their work, most women do not have the same initial career plans as men. They do not often enter the teaching profession with the expressed plan of achieving headship.

But, those who do have families, and those men who are fully involved in childcare, automatically develop highly sophisticated strategies for balancing work, home and family. And some of our course participants manage to study for higher qualifications at the same time. These strategies, such as prioritising, time-keeping, remembering and compartmentalising information, working with difficult people, attending to many needs at once, achieving deadlines, and maintaining a sense of purpose, are all at the centre of good management. But they are not immediately recognised, when developed by parents, as highly necessary management skills. We pay attention to them in our work, seeing them as transferable and important. Thus our participants respond in their evaluations with such comments as: "I feel much more confident", and "I was doing it right anyway" and "I understand much more clearly now". This is hopefully part of Freire's transformative dialogue - understanding and analysing present reality in order to reformulate it. And those who have taken part in the dialogue for themselves will be much more able to make it happen for other people.

Is there a place for a European network of those people interested in exploring the position of women in the management of education in Europe?

My conclusion to this paper is a list of suggestions for ways forward. Should those interested in encouraging women in education management form a network as part of ENIRDEM? Should that network include research and dissemination of good practice about the following points?

* Certainly in the United States, Australasia and Western Europe, it is now acknowledged that there are not enough women in education management. Are there enough in Central Europe?

* Are women managers expected to manage in ways that seem unnatural to them ? And are they seen as not good enough when they resist those expectations?

* How do we encourage managers to develop more feminine management styles?

* What are "women-friendly" management development programmes?

* And....

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